

# City of Bath World Heritage Site Advisory Board

**Meeting 28 February 2023  
2–4pm  
Guildhall, Bath**

## Minutes

Attendees		
Prof Barry Gilbertson (Chair) BG	Mayor Rob Appleyard RA	Andrew Grant AG
Simon DeBeer SdB	Stephen George SG	Alex Sherman AS
Paul Simons PS	Prof Marion Harney MH	Amy Frost AF
Tom Boden TB	Cllr Ruth Malloy RM	Prof David Goode DG
Sarah Simmonds SS	Dr Kristin Doern KD	Emma Frayling EF
Helen Daniels HD	Ainslie Ensom AE	Robert Campbell RC
Cllr Kevin Guy KG	Sophie Broadfield SB	Jeremy Boss JB
Cllr Robert Law RL	Polly Andrews PA	Paul Saynor PSa
Canon Guy Bridgewater GB	Rohan Torkildsen RT	Tony Crouch TC
		(27 attendees)
Apologies		
Kathryn Davis	Caroline Greenwood	Paula Freeland
Andy Gilson	Paul Saynor	Allison Herbert
John Richards		

No	Agenda Item	Act.
<b>1</b>	<b>Chairman's Welcome</b>	
1.1	The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, including the Mayor of Bath, Cllr Rob Appleyard, Simon DeBeer (B&NES Head of Planning), Stephen George (Senior Planning Policy Officer) and Emma Frayling (Visit West).	
1.2	BG explained that given the proposed changes in B&NES World Heritage management (see item 6 below), SdB had accepted a position on the Board.	
<b>2</b>	<b>Apologies for absence</b>	
2.1	As recorded above. EF is representing Visit West in Kathryn Davis's absence.	
<b>3</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
3.1	None declared.	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Adoption of previous minutes (25 October 2022) and matters arising</b>	
4.1	The minutes were accepted as a true record.	
4.2	JB confirmed that he did speak to the RUH about the wellbeing festival.	
4.3	DG asked about the Flow Country World Heritage nomination. TC confirmed it was the UK's next nomination and could be inscribed as early as the (re-arranged) UNESCO Committee this September.	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Chair's update</b>	
5.1	BG's report was circulated pre-meeting. BG invited KG to update the Board on the issue of an Architect in Residence for Bath.	
5.2	KG said that the intention was to give extra impetus to transformational proposals impacting upon the area. It was a model that many European cities employed. The University of Bath would host (and fund) this as a two-year visiting professorship.	
5.3	AS said that Bath Preservation Trust welcomed the exciting initiative and offered	

	involvement but noted that the devil could be in the detail and the process should be transparent. This should be a post which facilitates good design but does not dictate. BG said the intention was indeed to involve people in the selection process.	
5.4	SS said that it was important that the post holder was well-briefed in World Heritage matters and had experience in dealing with sensitive historic environments.	
<b>6</b>	<b>Reorganisation of the Council's World Heritage Team</b>	
6.1	RC introduced his report, which was circulated in advance of the meeting. The proposal is to move the WH function from Heritage Services to Planning. The rationale for this is that with the Bath World Heritage Centre open and the Great Spa Towns of Europe inscription delivered, the work focus has shifted from interpretation to place based issues including the impacts of development, sustainable tourism and the green transformation of the site. Unfortunately, as part of this move, the World Heritage Officer post was at risk of redundancy.	
6.2	RC further confirmed that the Council has written to BG as Chair of the Advisory Board offering a third 3-year term of office.	
6.3	BG said that as part of these changes, the opportunity should be taken to look at the terms of reference for both the Advisory Board Chair and the Enhancement Fund. He proposed the formation of a sub-group to do this. He also noted that in the offer of a further term of office, Sophie Broadfield had pointed to the importance of continuity throughout the changes outlined by RC above.	<b>BG/TC</b>
6.4	AS asked RC about proposed full time equivalent (FTE) staff numbers engaged with World Heritage. RC replied that currently there is a full-time World Heritage Manager supported by a World Heritage Officer working 11.5 hours per week. It is proposed that the full-time WH Manager post remains, supported by a dedicated resource to manage the Great Spas work, most likely on a contractual basis equivalent to around 2 days per week. This represents an increase in current capacity.	
6.5	DG asked whether the work conducted by Helen Daniels was not considered necessary moving forward. RC replied that the main thrust of WH work was moving away from interpretation, although WH Day would continue to be celebrated and the WH Centre would continue to be run by Heritage Services staff. DG asked that an appreciation of all that Helen has, and continues to do, is recognised in the minutes.	
6.6	AS commented that the WHS Management Plan, currently under revision, should set the forward agenda and he questioned whether presumptions were being made in advance of that work. RC said that we must respond to current circumstances and if it was necessary to adjust arrangements moving forward then this could be done.	
6.7	PS commented that the Great Spas work did indeed require further resource and that the interpretation needs of both inscriptions remained strong. He noted that any change in current post-holders would require an experienced/qualified new candidate. Advisory Board involvement in the changes was discussed and BG referred to the proposed sub-group (see 6.2 above).	
6.8	SS commented that the changes as proposed would need to be supported by adequate budget, both in terms of salary and projects.	
6.9	SdB said that as Head of Planning he was happy to play a greater role in delivery of the WH function and that the work would quite rightly straddle more than one Council service.	
<b>7</b>	<b>WH Manager update (including Management Plan update)</b>	
7.1	TC summarised his previously circulated report.	
7.2	The first half of the Management Plan revision project is now complete, with the factual elements of the two plans pulled together by consultant Chris Pound. The remaining half, which will see the issues, objectives and actions added, would soon begin. Offers of engagement from Board members in this work were appreciated.	
7.3	The UNESCO Periodic Reporting exercise has been completed in draft and is	

	now with Dept. Culture, Media and Sport for checking.	
7.4	The Great Spa Towns of Europe (GTSE) General Assembly is to be hosted in Bath on 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> of March. TC showed the programme for the assembly which included a social programme. A B&NES Single Member Decision has been approved agreeing that Bath can formally join the GSTE Association.	
7.5	TC noted that three major elements of work – the Management Plan revision, the Periodic Reporting exercise and the GSTE General Assembly – were currently coinciding at once, but that work pressures should soon ease.	
7.6	The GSTE General Assembly includes a tour of the recently completed Footprint Project in Bath Abbey. GB announced that the Abbey's Discovery Centre will open on Tuesday 7 March. It helps tell the story of Bath between the Roman and Georgian periods and is supplemented by updated information in the main Abbey itself, tailored school visits and new toilet facilities. The current suggested donation will be replaced by an entry charge of £6 per adult, which GB noted is always controversial. Bath Abbey is a cathedral offer without cathedral funding and any fees will, as part of the Recovery Plan, be kept under review.	
<b>8</b>	<b>World Heritage Enhancement Fund update</b>	
8.1	AE spoke to her previously circulated report, including updates on Granville Road, Prior Park Dams, the John Wood family tombs and trail, and Sydney Buildings lights.	
<b>9</b>	<b>Presentation – Local Plan Partial Update</b>	
9.1	Stephen George, B&NES Senior Planning Policy Officer, outlined the Local Plan Partial Update (LPPU) process. His presentation is distributed with these minutes.	
9.2	The LPPU process is part of a wider project to replace the existing Local Plan. The timetable for this is for issues and priorities to be identified, together with a review of the existing policy framework to assess performance. Then options and sites will be identified (2023), followed by formal consultation and a new draft plan by 2024.	
9.3	BG thanked SG for his presentation and expressed a desire for the Board to have greater involvement in major applications.	
9.4	AS asked if workings would be publicised at different stages of the process and SG said that at the mid-stage process there would be consultation. AS also mentioned the need to heed the findings of the UNESCO 2009 report and building heights in general as part of the evidence base.	
9.5	RK advocated looking at European cities as good examples to learn from. SG agreed, but said the Plan must remain appropriate for Bath.	
9.6	TB asked if the Local Plan and WHS Management Plan can be tied in together. SB responded that he and TC worked closely and both would seek to do this as far as timetables allowed.	
9.7	RT said B&NES policy framework is currently good and reflection on previous policy performance is important. He believed that both plans could complement each other as each can deliver things that the other cannot.	
9.8	DG was pleased to see the setting of the city being mainstreamed in policy making and also the promotion of good design. He asked if we had given grant funding for projects in the setting. BG responded that we had, but there is undoubtedly more work to do. AS agreed, saying that a recent survey had shown that much of the Green Belt is in poor condition.	
<b>10</b>	<b>Broadband Installation Guidance</b>	
10.1	AS outlined the guidance recently produced by Bath Preservation Trust relating to the installation of Broadband infrastructure. <a href="https://www.bath-preservation-trust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/BPT-Broadband-Guidance-January-2023.pdf">https://www.bath-preservation-trust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/BPT-Broadband-Guidance-January-2023.pdf</a> There are 2 companies currently working in Bath upgrading the old copper network to a faster and more reliable fibre network, essential for business. Homeowner guidance is included, enabling judgements to be made regarding the suitability of proposals made by installers and covering issues such as colour matching. AS noted that the installers were under no obligation to remove	

	redundant wiring or plug old holes.	
<b>11</b>	<b>World Heritage Day 2023</b>	
11.1	HD outlined proposals for WHD 2023 to be held in the Guildhall, Bath on Saturday 4 <sup>th</sup> March. The day was pulled forward from the usual April date to conjoin it with the Great Spas General Assembly, plus it was promoted as part of the Rebalance Bath Festival. The theme is Bath as a spa and a large range of stallholders will exhibit in the Banqueting Room, with a series of short talks in the adjoining Aix-en-Provence room. HD thanked all partners for their cooperation.	
11.2	BG thanked Helen for her organisation of WH Day not only this year but for so many years previously. The whole meeting gave a round of applause.	
<b>12</b>	<b>Rebalance Bath Festival</b>	
12.1	In Allison Herbert's absence TC showed slides summarising performance to date of the wellbeing festival. Over 150 activities had been staged by 70+ businesses featuring over 1,000 participants. Widespread media coverage included 15 national news features, resulting in an estimated 246k views. Feedback had been excellent, welcoming the extra activity at this time of the year. Dates of 25 January -18 February have already been set for 2024.	
<b>13</b>	<b>Any other business</b>	
13.1	The Mayor's Guides are once again running their popular walks to commemorate International Women's Day. Dates are Wednesday 8 March and Saturday 11 March, both at 2.30pm. Details are at <a href="http://www.bathguides.org.uk">www.bathguides.org.uk</a>	
13.2	BG reminded the meeting of the series of World Heritage themed talks to be held at the Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institute (BRLSI). There are six talks on Wednesdays at 7pm, starting on 22 March. For details and booking see <a href="http://www.BRLSI.org">www.BRLSI.org</a>	
	<b>Date of 2023 meetings: PLEASE DIARISE NOW</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuesday 20 June 2pm-4pm Council Chamber, Guildhall</li> <li>• October 2023. Date to be advised</li> </ul>	
	<b>Papers attached with these minutes:</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation from Stephen George</li> </ul>	